

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/730,782

Applicant(s)

CHRISTENSEN ET AL.

Examiner

Philip B. Tran

Art Unit

2155

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

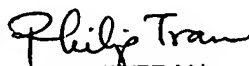
1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 4/4/2007.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-10 and 12-23.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date see Attached.
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____.


PHILIP TRAN
PRIMARY EXAMINER

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

2. Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Fischman (Reg. No. 34,594), the undersigned, on July 19, 2007.

3. The application has been amended as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

The claims of the invention have been amended as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for establishing a voice on demand private message chat between first and second client devices adapted for communicating via a text chat session, the method comprising the steps of:

at a first client device:

providing an indication as to the availability of a second client device for receiving a voice on demand private message chat;

selecting said second client;

receiving an audio input message from a user of said first client device; and,

responsive to said selecting, transmitting said audio input message to said second client device, and,

at said second client device:

receiving said audio input message and temporarily storing said received audio input message for access by a user of said second client device; and,

providing an indicator that said audio message has been received from said first client, said indicator integrated with text received from said first client device; and

rendering said audio input message,

wherein **either said first or second client device is enabled to select either an audio reply enabling audio reply or a text response mode enabling textual message reply from a single client device in a single chat session, whereby voice and text communications are interleaved in a single chat session such that** said second client device can receive and play back said audio input message via said private message chat without interrupting said text chat session.

6. (Currently Amended) A method for establishing a voice on demand private message chat between electronic devices used by a plurality of users and adapted for communicating via a text chat session, the method comprising the steps of:

providing an indication as to the availability of at least one user from said plurality of users for receiving a voice on demand private message chat;

selecting a user of said plurality of users;

receiving an audio input message from a first user; and

transmitting said audio input message to said at least one user of said plurality of users, and,

at said at least one user:

receiving said audio input message and temporarily storing said received audio input message for access by said at least one user; and,

providing an indicator that said audio message has been received from said first user, said indicator integrated with text received from said first user; and

rendering said audio input message,

wherein **said at least one user from said plurality of users is enabled to select either an audio reply enabling audio reply or a text response mode enabling textual message reply from a single electronic device in a single chat session, whereby voice and text communications are interleaved in a single chat session such that** said at least one user from said plurality of users can receive and play back said audio input message via said private message chat without interrupting said text chat session.

7. (Currently Amended) A system for providing a voice-based communications chat session comprising:

a first chat client device adapted to send and receive at least one audio message via a communications network;

a second chat client device adapted to send and receive at least one audio message via a communications network;

host server means in communication with said first and second chat client adapted to provide an indication as to the availability of the second chat client device for

receiving a voice on demand private message chat via said communications network

[[;]] receive **for receiving** an audio input message from a first chat client device

destined for said user of said second chat client device, [[;]] and, ~~transmit~~ **for**

transmitting said audio input message to said second chat client device via said communications network;

means for storing said audio input message, and,

means for providing an indicator that said audio message has been received from said first chat client, said indicator integrated with text received from said first user; and

means for rendering said audio input message,

wherein **either said first chat or second chat client device is enabled to select either an audio reply enabling audio reply or a text response mode enabling textual message reply from a single chat client device in a single chat session, whereby voice and text communications are interleaved in a single chat session such that** a user of said second chat client device is enabled to receive said audio message from said storage means via said private message chat without interrupting said text chat session.

11. (Canceled)

12. (Currently Amended) The system for voice chat as claimed in Claim [[11]] **17**, further comprising:

a host computer device including:

a means for determining availability status of said second chat client device for receiving a private message chat and providing an indication to a first client device as to the availability of said second chat client device to receive an audio input message;

a means for receiving an audio message input from said first client device and transmitting said audio input message to said second chat client device.

13. (Currently Amended) The system for voice chat as claimed in Claim [[11]] 17, wherein said first and second client device further comprises voice recognition means for transcribing received audio messages into textual information and integrating said textual information received from said first client device in a message chat session between users of said first and second devices.

17. (Currently Amended) ~~The A~~ system for voice chat ~~as claimed in Claim 14,~~
comprising:

a first client device comprising:

a means for receiving indication of the availability context of a second client device for receiving a voice on demand private message chat via a chat interface,

a means for selecting said second client device via said chat interface,

a means for receiving an audio message input from a user of said first client device, and,

a means for transmitting said audio message in response to said means for selecting said second client device; and,

said second client device comprising:

a means for indicating availability context to said first client device;

a means for receiving said transmitted audio message and storing said audio message;

a means for providing an indicator that said audio message has been received from said first client device, said indicator integrated with text received from said first client device; and,

a means for playing said audio message, wherein either said first ~~and~~ or second client device is enabled to select either an audio reply enabling audio reply or a text response mode enabling textual message reply from a single client device in a single chat session, whereby voice and text communications ~~may be~~ are interleaved in a single chat session enabling playing of said audio message without interrupting a text chat session.

21. (Currently Amended) A method for semi-synchronous voice chat comprising:
indicating availability context of a user of a second client device to a user of a first client device;

receiving at said first client device, said availability context indication of the second client device **for receiving a voice on demand private message chat;**

selecting said second client device via a chat interface provided with said first client device,

receiving an audio message input from a user of said first client device, and,
transmitting said audio message to said second client device over a communications network; and, said second client device,

receiving said transmitted audio message and storing said audio message; and,
providing an indicator integrated with text received from said first client device via a chat interface of said second client device that said audio message has been received from said first client device; and,

initiating playback of said audio message, **wherein either said first or second client device is enabled to select either an audio reply enabling audio reply or a text response mode enabling textual message reply from a single client device in a single chat session, whereby voice and text communications are interleaved in a single chat session enabling playback of said audio message** without interrupting a text chat session.

23. (Currently Amended) A program storage device readable by a machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for enabling semi-synchronous voice message chat, said method steps for enabling voice message chat comprising:

indicating availability context of a user of a second client device to a user of a first client device;

receiving at said first client device, said availability context indication of the second client device **for receiving a voice on demand private message chat**;

selecting said second client device via a chat interface provided with said first client device,

receiving an audio message input from a user of said first client device, and,
transmitting said audio message to said second client device over a communications network; and, said second client device,

receiving said transmitted audio message and storing said audio message; and,
providing an indicator integrated with text received from said first client device via a chat interface of said second client device that said audio message has been received from said first client device; and,

initiating playback of said audio message, **wherein either said first or second client device is enabled to select either an audio reply enabling audio reply or a text response mode enabling textual message reply from a single client device in a single chat session, whereby voice and text communications are interleaved in a single chat session enabling playback of said audio message** without interrupting a **text** chat session.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

4. Claims 1-10 and 12-23 (renumbered as 1-22) are allowable over the prior art of record.

5. This communication warrants no examiner's reason for allowance, as applicant's reply makes evident the reason for allowance, satisfying the record as whole as required by rule 37 CFR 1.104 (e). In this case, the substance of applicant's remarks in the Amendment filed on 04 April 2007 with respect to the amended claim limitations and further amended claim limitations in the Examiner's Amendment (see attached) point out the reason claims are patentable over the prior art of record. Thus, the reason for allowance is in all probability evident from the record and no statement for examiner's reason for allowance is necessary (see MPEP 13202.14).

6. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

7. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Philip B. Tran whose telephone number is (571) 272-3991. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

8. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



PHILIP TRAN
PRIMARY EXAMINER

Art Unit 2155
July 19, 2007